

chinery and the more speeded it is, the greater the necessity, if one would keep it productive, that it have periodical rest. The splendid spiritual nature of the believer can not reach its highest capacity without a regular time for rest and devotion. God knew what he was doing when he gave us this weekly day of rest.

Sunday School

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL.

Acts 9: 1-19.

Lesson for April 18, 1909.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"—Acts 9: 4.

SHORTER CATECHISM.

Q. 51. What is forbidden in the second commandment?

A. The second commandment forbiddeth the worshipping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in his word.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

(Permission of International Bible Reading Association.)

M.—Acts 9: 1-16.

T.—Acts 9: 17-30.

W.—Acts 22: 1-15.

Th.—2 Cor. 11: 21-33.

F.—Gal. 1: 11-24.

S.—1 Tim. 1: 12-17.

S.—Eph. 2: 1-10.

TOPICAL OUTLINE.

A Miracle of Grace—

Saul, the persecutor, vs. 1, 2.

Saul, the penitent, vs. 3-9.

Saul, the preacher, vs. 10-30.

LESSON COMMENT.

Evidently for the purpose of getting a connected study of the life of Paul, the Lesson Committee skipped the account of his conversion and we now return to it. Teachers, who may themselves be very familiar with the incidents of the life of the great Apostle, must remember that a generation has come into the Sunday school that does not know Paul and that much must be made of this opportunity to set him forth and to point out the great work he did. The greater part of the older members of the schools will be found to have very little real, workable knowledge of the facts of Paul's life so that teachers should not take too much for granted, but be prepared to very carefully set forth the wonderful life of the great preacher to the Gentiles.

If you have not recently done so, get a good life of Paul and read it carefully, comparing it with the scripture account at every point. Then make a careful preview of the life and work for your class, or, if you are a pupil, for your guidance in future study. For adult classes it would be well to prepare the way for a study of the various phases of Paul's life as, for instance, his preparation for his work, his call and its effect upon him, his preaching, his writings, his statement of the gospel, his meeting of difficulty, etc. It is well to call attention to this outline or a similar one at the outset, so that as the incidents occur they may be referred to their setting. This is a wonderful life we are to study of the man whom God raised up to do a great work at a critical time in the history of the church. In the lesson before us at this time we see three aspects of our subject depicted: Paul, the Persecutor; Paul, the Penitent, and Paul, the Preacher.

Paul, the Persecutor: It is but natural that Saul of Tarsus, with his training and his great zeal for the religion of Jehovah, should have hated the Nazarenes. He was pre-eminently a conservative. To the conservative a proposal that

involves a change in the existing order is an offense. The writer once heard a distinguished minister of our Church say of this class in the Church that, they carried a double-barrelled shot-gun to be used on any plan that involved a change. One barrel was labelled, "We never did it that way before," and if this failed to bring down the proposal, the other was used and it bore the legend, "We tried something like that once and it wouldn't work."

That Saul's work of persecution was vigorous and of great intensity is evidenced by the numerous references Paul makes to it himself. It will be helpful to study them. They are as follows: Twice in the address before the Jews at Jerusalem, recorded in Chap. 22; again in the address before King Agrippa, found in the twenty-sixth chapter; and in the following places in the epistles: I Cor. 15: 9; Gal. 1: 13; Phil. 3: 6; I Tim. 1: 13. Get from these and other passages a very clear conception of Saul of Tarsus, that later it may be compared with Paul, the Apostle.

Paul, the Penitent: Study very carefully the portion of the lesson dealing with the vision that Paul had of Christ. It seems, in fact, to have been more than a vision. He records it as the last appearance of the Lord. Notice the two questions of Paul. First there must be a recognition of the Lord and an understanding of his claim. Then Paul asks, "What wilt thou have me to do?" There has been reference made previously to a recent movement to have people take a pledge to do what they think Jesus would do. It seems to the writer that there is danger of a wrong emphasis. Paul's question puts the matter from the right point of view. It is the desire to know Christ's will for our lives that will uplift, rather than considering what Jesus would do if he were here. He is not here, but has us here, and has laid down the principles of the Gospel and we must apply them to our lives.

Paul, the Preacher: Paul's question is answered and he is given the great work of preaching to the Gentiles and becomes the world's greatest human preacher. In this connection it will be well to note the change that has been wrought in Paul. The change has been well set forth as follows:

1. The purpose and trend of his life was changed.
2. He was changed in his relations to Jesus.
3. He was changed in the quality of his morality.
4. He was changed in his views of religion and of God, and in his understanding of God's word.
5. He was changed in his life work.

Geo. D. Booth.

There is one Christian minister for every 500 of the population of the United States, and there is but one in every 114,000 in Japan, one in 165,000 in India, one in 222,000 in Africa, and one in 437,000 in China.

There are 405,297 temples and shrines in Japan, and only 1,635 churches, chapels and preaching places; nearly 250 times as many places to worship myriad gods as to worship the living God.

There is no person so poor that he cannot pray, which is the most important support to missionary work. Let our prayer be, however, to the point: "Oh, God, weigh me in thy missionary scales and let me know my worth to thee!"

The first female missionary of whom we read was the Samaritan woman. Thus we are let into the secret of missionary motive power, "We have found the Messiah." Have we found the Christ? Shall we not make haste to tell the blessed news?

"Let us give our money to the point of sacrifice, sympathy even with tears, prayers to the white heat of importunity, and our service even unto death."—F. B. Meyer.